

Message Text

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E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: YE, SA, PFOR

SUBJECT: PRINCE SULTAN ON YEMENI SITUATION

REF SANAA 9

SUMMARY: MIN DEF SULTAN TELLS MODERATE YAR LEADERS TO CLOSE RANKS AND GIVE FIRST ATTENTION TO INTERNAL DEVELOPMENT. SULTAN STATED SAG CONFIDENCE IN HAMDI, AND SUSPICION OF AL-AYNI. SAG SURVEY OF YAR ARMED FORCES TO BE FINISHED IN NEAR FUTURE, WITH REPORT AVAILABLE IN ABOUT A MONTH. END SUMMARY.

1. DURING JANUARY 4 CALL ON PRINCE SULTAN TO DISCUSS SEVERAL SUGGESTIONS (SEE SEPTELS) I ALSO TOOK OCCASION TO INTRODUCE AMBASSADOR SCOTES WHO WAS IN JIDDA ON CONSULTATIONS PRIOR TO TAKING UP HIS NEW DUTIES IN SANAA. PRINCE SULTAN EXPRESSED PLEASURE ON HAVING OPPORTUNITY DISCUSS YEMENI SITUATION NOTING IMPORTANCE SAUDI GOVERNMENT ATTACHES TO CLOSE COOPERATION AND COORDINATION BETWEEN SAG AND USG VIS-A-VIS YEMEN.

2. SULTAN INFORMED AMBASSADOR SCOTES AND ME THAT A FEW DAYS AGO HE HAD HELD "LONG MEETING" WITH CONSULTATIVE ASSEMBLY PRESIDENT ABDULLA AL-AHMAR; SHEIKH SINAN ABU LUHUM; DEP. CINC LT.COL. MUJAHID ABU SHUWARIB; AND LT.GEN. HASAN AL-AMRI.

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SULTAN SAID THAT BEFORE HE "PACKED THEM OFF TO SANAA" IN

A SPECIAL SAUDI AIRCRAFT, HE TOLD THE AFOREMENTIONED IN NO UNCERTAIN TERMS THAT THEY SHOULD MEND THEIR WAYS AND STOP THEIR INTERNAL BICKERING. HE SAID THAT HE EMPHASIZED TO THEM THAT SAG WOULD UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES COUNTENANCE A LEFTIST GOVERNMENT IN NORTH YEMEN AND REMINDED HIS YEMENI GUESTS THAT THE PRESENT NORTH YEMEN REGIME AND SAG HAVE A COMMON AND DANGEROUS ENEMY IN SOUTH YEMEN. SULTAN WARNED THEM THAT IF THEY AS NORTH YEMENS MODERATE LEADERSHIP DO NOT CLOSE RANKS, THEY WOULD PLACE ALL OF YEMEN IN DANGER. MOREOVER, SAUDI GOVERNMENT WOULD HAVE TO RETHINK ITS CURRENT POLICY OF AID AND SUPPORT FOR THEM.

3. SULTAN CONTINUED THAT HE ASSURED THE YEMENIS THAT SAG WISHES ONLY STABILITY AND PROGRESS FOR YEMEN AND INTENDS TO CONTINUE ITS MAJOR AID PROGRAMS FOR THIS PURPOSE. SULTAN ALSO ASSURED THEM THAT SAG HAS NO WISH TO INTERFERE IN YEMEN'S INTERNAL AFFAIRS NOR DOES IT CARE WITH WHOM YEMEN HAS RELATIONS WHETHER IN ARAB WORLD OR ELSEWHERE. SAG BELIEVES, HOWEVER, THAT YEMEN MUST NOW AND FOR COMING YEARS DEVOTE FULL ATTENTION TO INTERNAL DEVELOPMENT--EVERYTHING ELSE IS SECONDARY.

4. PRINCE SULTAN STATED THAT HE ALSO TOLD THE YEMENIS THAT WHILE SAUDIS CONTINUE TO BE PREPARED TO HELP VARIOUS YEMENI LEADERS, THEY CONSIDER COL. HAMDI "A CLEAN, COOL-HEADED MAN" AS HEAD OF YEMENI GOVERNMENT AND THEREFORE MAN THROUGH WHO SAG PREFERS TO DEAL. PRINCE SULTAN SAID HE ALSO EMPHASIZED THAT SAG CONTINUES HAVE DEEP SUSPICION OF AL-AYNI, WHOM HE DESCRIBED AS "GOOD POLITICIAN, BUT ONE WHO DANCES ON TOO MANY ROPES." PRINCE SULTAN CONTINUED THAT IN THIS REGARD SAG HAD NO OBJECTIONS IF AL-AYNI CONTINUES TO PLAY A ROLE WITHIN YEMEN IN SOME HONORARY CAPACITY, SUCH AS PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC. SAG IS CONCERNED, HOWEVER, ABOUT AL-AYNI'S INVOLVEMENT IN DIRECT DEALINGS WITH YEMENI PEOPLE WHO, HE SAID, "DO NOT TRUST AL-AYNI."

5. CONCERNING LT. GENERAL HASSAN AL-AMRI, SULTAN SAID THAT HE SENT A CABLE TO HAMDI REQUESTING THAT AL-AMRI BE PERMITTED TO RETURN TO YEMENI FOR A FEW
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DAYS FOLLOWING WHICH AL-AMRI SHOULD "VOLUNTARILY" LEAVE TO AWAIT A FORMAL SUMMONS IN THE FUTURE AFTER THE YAR DECIDES WHAT DUTIES AL-AMRI SHOULD UNDERTAKE. SULTAN SAID THAT IN THIS CONNECTION HE HAD ADVISED HAMDI THAT YEMEN DOES NOT NEED A DEFENSE MINISTER AS YET. SULTAN SAID THAT A COMMANDER IN CHIEF SHOULD BE ENOUGH AND THAT HAMDI SHOULD CONTINUE IN THIS CAPACITY.

6. SULTAN CONTINUED THAT SAG HOPES USG WILL ALSO MAKE MAJOR EFFORT TO HELP YEMEN AND DO SO IN NEAR FUTURE. HE PLEDGED FULL COOPERATION OF SAUDI AMBASSADOR AND SAUDI MILITARY ATTACHE IN YEMEN WITH AMBASSADOR SCOTES AND EMBASSY. IN THIS LATTER CONNECTION HE ALSO INFORMED US THAT RECENT SAUDI REVIEW OF YEMENI REQUEST FOR MILITARY ASSISTANCE WILL BE FINISHED IN NEAR FUTURE, AND HE PROMISED ME A COPY OF THIS REVIEW IN ABOUT A MONTH.

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